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about 1470 bear a marked resemblance to the Majolica of Italy, but the colors are somewhat brighter, in fact, it has always been supposed that, during the early part of the sixteenth century, the art of making majolica was introduced into Antwerp by Guido di Sarino, who settled at that place.

A favorite style of old Dutch mug was called the Apostles' mug, and was ornamented by figures of the Evangelists. These were very common during the seventeenth century, and in many of the old specimens the details were exceedingly well executed.

Another very artistic receptacle for large bunches of flowers can be made by using one of the ordinary blue and white stone jars that are usually sold for holding flour, spice, etc. Most of these jars are barrel shape, and are an imitation of old Dutch ware; they are usually of a white glazed surface, decorated with lines of dark blue. When filled with a mass of gorgeous flowers they make a charming study of still life, and are often far more artistic and quaint than many of the Japanese and Chinese vases and jars, that are seldom effective as a background, and are far more commonplace.

WASHING LACE.

THE washing of lace is an art. Large pieces, such as curtains and bedspreads, must be shaken perfectly free from dust, wet in tepid water, and rubbed with mild white soap. Next put them in a clean wooden or earthen vessel, cover with soft water about lukewarm, and set all day in the sunshine. Take them out next day and wash through clean suds. Do not rub or ring them, but lave up and down. Be sure you have plenty of water, especially for rinsing. If a trace of soap remains it will rot the fabric. After rinsing, hang them smooth on the line to drain. Wringing makes creases, besides injuring the mesh. When three parts dry, fold flat and rub into them with the hand thin starch re-inforced with gum water. Gum arabic is best. Put a quart of boiling water to the ounce, stir till dissolved, let stand till cool, and pour off the clear fluid from the sediment. Mix it with twice its own bulk of starch, in which there is neither sugar, wax, nor spermaceti. After rubbing in, roll up smooth for three hours, then spread a clean sheet on the carpet and pin the lace upon it, taking care to stretch it exactly square, and to put a pin in the point of each scallop. For ecru lace, a writer in the *Trade Bureau* recommends coloring the starch with hay tea, made by steeping three pounds of best bright timothy in a gallon of boiling water. Use the tea instead of water to make the starch.

Soap and sunshine will clean lace of any sort without wear. If it is very dirty it may need two days soaking. Wash, rinse, and lay out smooth upon a board with a covered sheet. When about half dry, pull and clap them between the hands, until the mesh is clear, and pin out on board to dry. If you like it yellow, dip in clear, cold coffee before clapping it. To starch or iron lace for personal wear is, according to this writer, textile profanation.

Clean very fine lace with benzine. If it is old and crazy, pin it smooth on a flannel-covered board, saturate it with benzine and press it out with a soft napkin. Put make-up lace—collars, handkerchiefs, caps and so on—into glass or earthenware, and pour benzine over them with a liberal hand. Whirl them rapidly about in it squeeze gently, drop into a clean vessel, and put on fresh fluid. It will remove every particle of dirt, without in any way altering the yellow antique hue, or shrinking the mesh—as water will do, no matter how carefully applied. Point lace is never washed betwixt maker and wearer. If it gets soiled in working, white lead in powder is put on to whiten it. Gas, sea air, or a dozen other things would make the lead turn dark, or ruin a costly bit of cobweb in which the owner takes delight. Benzine will remove it without harm. After the lace comes out of it, pin it as smoothly as possible upon a linen covered board, and put it in the sunshine for six hours. If you wish to whiten it let dew fall on it, and be dried away by the sun for a week or two. If pressed for time the bleaching may be accomplished in a day by wetting the cloth with weak soap-suds every two hours, and pinning the lace over it. If you are careful to draw it tight, it will hardly show that it has been dampened. If you are not, the meshes will contract, perceptibly. It is something to be handled daintily from first to last. In wearing, never pull or drag roughly into place; sew it only with fine thread and needles; above all, pin it with small sharp pins, if pin it you must. Crushed flower stalks often leave ugly stains well-nigh indelible; wherefore, beware how you wear them against your lace.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ELIA. "More than once you have greatly assisted me in your replies to questions in regard to home efforts in housefurnishing and decoration; and I once more wish to take advantage of your kindness. Can you tell me anything about leather-work? My mother says that she remembers when a young lady to have seen leather-work used as decoration for picture frames, work-boxes, etc. I have also heard of carved leather as employed for chair and sofa seats. I am under the impression that somewhere I have seen specimens of the leather-work first named; it occurs to me that, in the house of one of my Southern aunts, I saw a picture with the frame decorated in leather-work, which closely resembled bold wood-carving; but I can scarcely imagine how carving can be done on leather. However, I am anxious to know what can be done with leather in decoration. I shall be glad if you will name the leather suitable for one and the other purpose, and also the tools necessary for the work."

Years ago, when some of us were children, and doubtless before you were born, work in leather was a favorite pastime with ladies of artistic fancy, for decorating picture frames, work-boxes, and other small articles in house-furnishing. We are glad to think that there is even a remote prospect of its revival, for it was really handsome and very substantial. Sheepskin, tanned red, was the leather usually employed; and the tools in use were sharp scissors, sharp knives, a few moulding-sticks, a small hammer, and small tacks. For example, if it was intended for a picture frame, to be relieved by a garland of rose-leaves, the leaves were cut out and the edges were serrated to imitate nature, with sharp scissors, and the veining done with a sharp-pointed bone, or steel instrument. A coat of sizing, made of isinglass, was then applied to the wrong side, and, while still damp, the leaves were bent into shape with the fingers, and in this state tacked on the frame, care being had that the points of the leaves should overlap the stem end, and the leaves laid on so thickly as to hide the heads of the tacks. A rose garland, combining both the blossoms and the leaves, was often the result of the ambitious effort of the worker in leather. For this, greater skill was required in the artist—an accurate knowledge of the anatomy of the rose being necessary to insure success. The leaves were tacked on with satisfactory effect, at each corner of the frame, and here and there between the corners the roses and rose-buds were set, the outer petals and the roses tacked on first and the stamens simulated by a piece of fringed leather; the semblance of buds were formed of several petals, with a little fringe at the point, and set on to curve, after the idea in nature. In some cases, the work was varnished, and occasionally the leather was colored, to imitate rose-wood, ebony or cherry; but the effect of carved wood was best secured in the use of sheepskin as it came from the hands of the tanner.

Carved leather had been handed down from the Saracens, and doubtless centuries ago has place in the rich trappings with which those bold Moorish invaders were wont to caparison their war-horses. The work is extremely delicate and beautiful, consisting of dainty and elaborate arabesque traceries, evidently first drawn or stamped on the leather and perfected by a fine, sharp knife. There seems no reason why leather carving may not become one of the industries in which women can engage. It must require fine taste and a delicate hand; and now that efforts in mechanical skill are encouraged for women, leather carving might be judiciously attempted. Classic designs of sphynxes, gargoyles, griffins and other fabulous figures would be suitable for this work, while acanthus leaves, scrolls and frets of the Greek classic period might be delightful introductions in it. Beside the dainty outcome in the picture frames, etc., of the present, the leather work of our mothers though not unpleasant might seem comparatively heavy, though hardly homely, while leather carving is in every sense artistic and delightful. We would like to see it successfully practiced in our country. Morocco is the leather that we have seen used for carving decoration, and the stretching the leather on a board and tacking it securely readily suggests itself as necessary to the operation of the artist in the work. Carved leather somewhat resembles pressed leather, but the effect is much handsomer and much more artistic and unique.

JANE L. MORTIMER. "I have been told that, in centres of luxury and fashion, decorated bed-room towels are among the necessities of housewives that strive to keep abreast of the popular fancies. Will you tell me something about this peculiar 'fad' in house furnishing. My husband has independent means, and in every particular encourages refinement of taste in household appointments: So I am disposed in all things concerned with housewifery to administer to his fancies. The decoration spoken of, on towels, I suppose must be embroidery. I would like to know something about the character of the embroidery; and I shall be obliged if you will advise me in regard to the style of towels now in vogue."

Fashions in towelings have their day as well as in table-

linen, curtain fabrics, carpets and other manufactures for house furnishing. The standard linen towelings are in the damask and huckaback textures, but there seems no end to the variety in which the damasks are produced, and damask incorporated with huckaback gives much variety to the latter manufacture. The present fancy in toweling, however, is for the plain Russian cross-stitch, which is made up hemstitched, and in some wise enriched with embroidery, both the outline and the satin stitches are employed, and in some instances the work is in the Russian cross-stitch, or tapestry stitch, done over canvas and the threads pulled out. With the hemstitching referred to, the most approved decoration for towels, is the surname initial, or the monogram of the owner. This lettering may be plain, and so it is very pleasing, but embroidery lettering is generally of an ornamental character, the design usually floriated; or with the lettering in graceful script, the initial or the monogram is twined about with flowers, or is set in a nest of flowers. The embroidery should be set an inch or two above the hem, or within the woven border of the towel, and it should be of sufficient compass, and heavy enough to give character to the article upon which it appears.

Modern housekeepers of fastidious ideas, have a set of towels for each bed chamber, these corresponding in the color finish with the appointments of the separate rooms in question. In this case, should embroidery be resorted to as a finish of the towels, it is made to correspond with the colors that enter into the weaving. Should red appear in the bordering of the towels, the monogram or initial is wrought in red and white; should the design in the bordering be wrought out in blue, blue appears in the embroidery, and so on, the needle-work corresponding with the colors woven in the towels. Some of the handsomest towels that have come under our notice have a surface of huckaback, with damask striping at the ends, divided by a stripe of canvas texture, the canvas stripe serving as the ground for a rich design of embroidery in the Russian cross stitch. The work was done in crewels and many colors entered into it. But this work did not admit of the initial or the monogram; and thus for the purpose intended, it was not as good taste as the work done in the linen or the cotton embroidery threads. Industrious ladies are finishing the ends of their towels in elaborate *punto tirato* embroidery, or drawn work, with the monogram as supplementary, and decorated towels are the complement of the richly decorated table linen seen in households in which industry and elegance prevails.

MATILDA. "I am a resident of a Southern City. A friend of mine on a recent visit to New York, returned with glowing accounts of the fancies in house-keeping goods that she came across in shopping. Among other things with which she was delighted, were sofa pillows covered objectively with puffed silk, under an embroidery cover of some other material. Have you seen any of the sofa pillows, and if so will you describe them more accurately than my friend was able to describe them? THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER has reached our city, and find it invaluable in suggestiveness. It seems to me it would find place in every household that would be guided in matters of taste comfort and convenience."

The sofa pillars alluded to are generally covered with full puffing of the India silks, or the soft and limp American silks, with an over covering of upholsterer's satin, pongee, artists' linen drilling, or some other suitable substantial material, in cut work, or Roman embroidery. The object in the cut work, is to show the silk puffing, which is always in some contrasting color—red, rose, rich blue, turquoise blue, violet or any effective color. In some cases, there is a plain back to the cushion or pillow, but in most instances, the puffing covers the pillow all over, and the over cover shows a scalloped edge, an eyelet being worked in each scallop, the sides laced together with a silk cord cord, the puffing appearing charming through the interstices of the embroidery and the lacing cord. A very elegant and unique sofa pillow, of rounded form, covered first with puffing of ciel-blue soft American silk, has a superposed cover of chamois skin, in pressed cut work, a line of gold following the edges of the design, and little bunches of painted forget-me-nots scattered over the surface. Scallops bordered the cover, edged with a band of gold about a quarter of an inch wide; the eyelets stamped in the scallops were ringed with gold, and a blue silk cord laced the sides together. A rounded sofa pillow, covered with violet silk puffing, would be very elegant with a chamois skin over cover, dotted with painted pansies or violets; and a cushion covered with pink silk puffing, may have painted wild roses on the chamois skin cover. Should a suitable textile material be used in the place of the chamois skin, for the over cover of these dainty sofa pillows, the idea in the painted blossoms can be carried out in embroidered blossoms. But these

delicate elegancies should be used only with suitably elegant surroundings.

FLORENCE V. TAPPEN. "Among inherited household effects, I have a mahogany bedstead that is at the same time a delight and a cause of anxiety. It belongs to the period that succeeded the four-post bedstead with the tester having a towering head board, with two foot posts and no foot board. The wood of this bedstead is very rich, but there seems to be a want of balance between the head and the foot, and a dissatisfying incongruity of proportion, if I may so express myself. I thought the fault might be relieved by a canopy. If you can imagine the style of my unfortunate treasure, please let me know what you think of the idea of the canopy, and suggest, if you please how the canopy can be fashioned, and the proper hangings."

There need be little care about fashioning the canopy for your bedstead, if you are willing to incur the expense. You can have for it a bowed frame of mahogany, with silk or muslin gathered to the centre under a rosette for the top, and curtains laid in smooth folds to hang behind the head board, side bars confined by screws fastening it to the head posts of the bedstead, or it may be fastened at the centre by a great screw in the ceiling first above where your bed is placed in your chamber. This is the plan which to us seems obvious; perhaps an upholsterer might suggest a more pleasing plan. For winter hangings, we like best those of French cretonne, lined with silesia, and looped back with woolen cords or brass chains, unless you feel disposed to have the hangings of worsted damask or silk brocatelle. For summer hangings we would say a good word for white cottage muslin dotted with spots the size of old-fashioned wafers. Should you incline to something more fanciful in your hangings, and to expend upon them some of your own handiwork, you would have something very handsome and artistic, if you used Bolton sheeting enriched with outlined embroidery, done with the coarse flax thread; now so much used for rich effects in needlework. Hanging of Bolton sheeting relieved with an Arabesque design of outline work, done in several shades of gold color, with frieze of the several shades of gold color knotted in the front edge of the bed hangings, would be exceedingly effective.

LETITIA M. CRANE. "Through a number of your excellent magazine, which has lately fallen into my hands, I learned for the first time of your "Home Workshop" department, and of the accommodating spirit which pervades it. Henceforth, believe me I shall be the friend of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER. My present object in writing you, is to ask if you can mention anything that I can accomplish of my own effort, which would be suitable for a birthday present for my husband. This anniversary will occur the 1st of January, and I wish to make it memorable to my husband by something in a gift which will be both useful and pretty. Like many of his sex, he feels much complimented by presents, even though they be purchased with his own money; but in this case I do not want to draw upon his purse, my own industry serving in the place of usual expenditure. Can you assist me in this?"

Your remark in reference to our magazine is encouraging, and is gratefully received. A shirt-case, with a mouchoir case to match, makes a suitable, and always a very acceptable present for a gentleman. For making the shirt-case, use either plain or figured India silk, with lining of quilted white satin, or the white silk matelasse cloth which comes for table covers, etc., instead of the silk, you can use the brown linen drilling, to be formed over dry artistic embroidery materials. The quantity required for the shirt-case is about three-fourths or seven-eighths of a yard; or it can be determined by taking a shirt as folded by the laundress, and measuring twice around loosely with additional for the flap about half the depth of one side. Lay a sheet of cotton batting upon it, which must be sprinkled with some agreeable sachet powders, between the outside and the lining of the shirt-case; turn in the edges of the two materials and serge them together, and for a finish sew on small gold bullion cords, with straps of inch wide satin ribbon in old gold color, doubled and stitched together, and fasten to straps with gilt buckles. The monogram of the gentleman for whom the case is intended should be embroidered on the flap. The mouchoir case is a double square of about eight inches, finished to correspond with the shirt case; and if made of plain material, it may be relieved with a design in embroidery on one side and the owners monogram on the other. A very beautiful shirt case with mouchoir case to match, in illustration of what we have told you, is of old blue India silk, lined with white matelasse cloth, trimmed with a gold cord, and finished with old gold satin ribbon straps, fastened with gilt buckles. The gentleman's monogram on each piece is in script design, about two inches deep, wrought in white silk outlined with Japanese gold thread, and on the opposite side of the mouchoir case there is a floriated design in Kensington embroidery done in white, outlined with gold thread. This embroidery is done with a single strand of the silk fillosette. As gentlemen generally are sagaciously opposed to nauseating perfumes, it is well to be careful of the sachet powder you may use. The most delicate and lastingly agreeable of these powders, are the violet and the white rose; and frangipani is pleasant.